

City of Milpitas
Unapproved Minutes
Telecommunications Commission
September 15, 2003

I. Call to Order & Roll Call:

Chair Alcorn called the meeting to order.

Members Present: A. Alcorn, N. Gupta, I. Munir, W. Lam; R. Gopalara D. Gupta, G. Ali-Santosa, A. Ettinger, P. Gupta, P. Peterson

I.S. Staff: B. Marion, E. Pasion

City Council: A. Gomez

Members Absent, V. Mathur

II. Pledge of Allegiance:

The Commission recited The Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Announcements:

Staff reported that Council member Gomez would not be present due to schedule conflict with the Library Commission meeting. Chair Alcorn noted that a request from the Library Commission was given to him about installing a hearing assistive system similar to that in the council chambers.

IV. Approval of the Agenda:

Motion to approve the agenda as submitted.

M/S N. Gupta/D. Gupta Ayes: 10

V. Approval of the Minutes
August 18, 2003

Motion to approved the minutes as submitted.

M/S N. Gupta/D. Gupta Ayes: 10

VI. Citizen's Forum

No comments made for the record.

VII. Continued-New Business:

1. Update of cable franchise Comcast Cable.

Bill Marion, Information Services Director, provided a summary of current activities involving the cable television franchise with Comcast cable. He also provided copies of the draft needs assessment to the Commission how may have not read the document.

Mr. Marion reported that public input was taken, historical documents reviewed, technical review, web survey and drafted a preliminary cable franchise document. Currently, a fee-desk audit was underway with Comcast. Staff is working on seeking information regarding Comcast's financial data involving the cable franchise.

Staff has also been working with the Milpitas Unified School District in establishing a community access and educational

access cable channels. Staff noted that the City would need to extend to deadline to complete the overall cable television franchise review process.

Mr. Marion noted that the City would be submitting to Comcast a formal letter of review of the Milpitas cable television franchise. Additionally, the City would be reviewing the financial status of the Comcast cable television franchise and as part of the on going audit of the company.

Mr. Marion presented several options that involved establishing a public access channel. The options to consider included contracting with Mountain View's nonprofit community access channel, continue to recommend the relationship with the Newark local origination cable access television studio, or recommend that a studio be established through the Milpitas Unified School district for public access and that funding be provided through grant money from Comcast.

Staff was considering the idea that a facility be made available through the school district to provide 20 hours a week for public access television use. Funding would be made through a proposed \$250,000 capital grant with an additional \$50,000 capital grant for the school district educational channel. In total \$300,000 would be granted to fund and support equipment and cost for operational use.

Additionally, the Commission would also become an overseer of the Milpitas public access cable channel and would be instrumental in establishing a volunteer training program, instruction and programming guidelines and operational policies. The initial governance and control of the public access channel would be through the Commission.

Chair Alcorn asked where would this possible studio be located. Staff noted that it would be located at the school district offices. Commissioner Peterson noted that this studio would need to be located separated from the everyday student population. The school district is evaluating the overall needs and cost to set up a public access studio before it can full commit to this project. The school district's superintendent is interested in seeing this project develop.

Commissioner P. Gupta asked of the granting funding source. Staff noted the grant would be through Comcast supporting public access.

Commissioner Gopal Rao would like additional information to help better understand the amount of potential usage of the public access studio. Staff noted that some programming could overlap between cable access and the educational channel.

In the meantime, Mr. Marion noted that the City would submit to Comcast its intent to seek formal review process of the cable television franchise. The current extension will expire

on October 10. Staff will request to the City Council an additional extension of possibly nine to twelve months to complete this franchise renegotiation with Comcast. All must be completed before any additional discussion or planning of a public access channel is to start.

Staff based on the needs assessment that the Milpitas community is interested in establishing a public access channel.

Chair Alcorn asked if the content would be delivered over the internet as well as cable television. Staff noted that the Mountain View access studio was able to send its signal over the internet along with its local cable television channel.

Commissioner D. Gupta noted that agreements would need to be completed first with Comcast before public access use policies could be discussed.

Commission Lam asked of the quality levels. Staff noted that customer service standards have been developed and included regarding cable service outages, refunds, reports to the city every quarter outlining the various problems encounter.

Mr. Marion will report next month to update the Commission on the progress of the cable television franchise negotiations.

Motion to note receipt and file.

M/S N. Gupta/R. Gopal Rao Ayes: 10

2. August '03 Monthly I.S. Report

Bill Marion, Information Services Director, provided a summary of activities during the month of August in the Information Services department.

He reported that work was in progress in developing an economic development web page pertaining to available city commercial properties, he provided a visual demonstration of the improved connectivity of the 237-880-Crown Plaza web camera which was replaced with a new antenna, he reported on the level of usage of the Milpitas web stream archives and finally, he reported that staff will be making a recommendation on a new CAD dispatch system by mid October.

Motion to note receipt and file.

M/S N. Gupta/D. Gupta Ayes: 10

3. Round Table Discussion.

Chair Alcorn reported that a request from a member of the Library Commission was seeking help regarding the sound system in the first floor Commission Conference room. The Commission was requested to look into the possibility of installing a similar assistive hearing system like that in the City Council Chambers.

Staff noted it would report back on the cost of implementing similar system.

Vice Chair N. Gupta asked if the Commission's future meetings could be held in the City Council Chambers. Staff would submit a request to the City Council and City Manager's office for consideration.

VIII. Adjournment of Meeting

The Commission adjourned its meeting to Monday, October 20, 2003.

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